



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Office of Legislative Counsel
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Telephone:

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TO: Mr. Michael Van Dusen
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives

Mike:

Per our discussion.

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Deputy Legislative Counsel

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I rise to say a few words about a dedicated American who has just concluded 32 years of distinguished government service. William E. Colby, the outgoing Director of Central Intelligence, presided over the CIA from September 1973 through January 1976. This was a tumultuous time for American intelligence. The United States intelligence community, particularly the CIA, was buffeted by public attacks of alleged abuses and shortcomings.

Most, if not all, of the mistakes of the Agency were discovered, investigated and corrected by Bill Colby as Executive Director Comptroller or as Director of Central Intelligence. He issued clear instructions and instituted internal reforms to prevent the reoccurrence of ^{the few} transgressions of law and public policy. He kept the Agency going and maintained its effectiveness during almost two years of media distortion. He went before the American people and the Congress on numerous occasions to try to place the Agency record in perspective. In doing so, Bill Colby gave this nation an unprecedented glimpse of how American intelligence worked and how intelligence served the nation.

Bill Colby was born in 1920 in the state of Minnesota. He joined the Army in 1941 and saw service behind the enemy lines in Europe as an officer in the Office of Strategic Services. With brief time out for law and diplomatic service, Bill Colby served anonymously for most of his life as a professional intelligence officer. Today, he is suffering the unkind notoriety of a blemished Agency. This is unfair to Bill and the Agency.

The returns will soon be in. Both the House and Senate investigations are about to close. ^{To the extent} Their reports, ^{and} ~~I submit,~~ will be fair and put to rest the many wild charges about the Agency, ^{it will be a tribute to} Bill Colby's candor and cooperative spirit, ~~helped make this possible.~~ Beyond restoring public and congressional confidence in the business of intelligence, Bill Colby has played a vital role in making the Central Intelligence Agency a modern, American, and the best intelligence organization in the world. It's now up to the Congress to help keep it that way.

On behalf of the Congress, I want to thank William E. Colby for his unstinting service to the nation.